

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY
Juvenile MIOCR Program – (\$999,971 grant)

Santa Cruz County's Juvenile MIOCR Program addresses the mental health service gaps for juvenile justice youth in the north-county region. The goals of the program are to screen, assess, stabilize and connect youth to appropriate mental health and substance abuse services and ensure treatment compliance before transitioning youth back to a general probation caseload. This project utilizes a combination of services and best practices to provide intensive case management services (one caseload exclusively dealing with the gender-specific needs of young women), Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, and workshops encouraging pro-social behavior to approximately 146 youth per year.

A key element of this program is the Placement Screening Committee (PSC)- a multi-disciplinary team comprised of Probation staff, Children's Mental Health staff, representatives from County Drug and Alcohol programs, Child Welfare Service Agency staff, community-based organizations, treatment team members and, if appropriate, youth and their families. The PSC reviews screening and assessment results to determine MIOCR program eligibility. If the youth is found appropriate, the treatment team develops individualized treatment plans for participants. Once enrolled, each youth will be assigned a treatment team consisting of a Probation Officer, Mental Health Clinician, Transitional Specialist and a Job Developer; this team regularly assesses client progress and determines if mental health needs are being met or if treatment plans require modifications.

Services provided to program youth include individual and family counseling, cognitive therapy (individual and group), Thinking for a Change (a program promoting pro-social behavior), Seven Challenges (a culturally competent substance abuse treatment program), job development workshops and linkage to employment, leadership programs, family strengthening education (Cara y Corazon), and psychiatric evaluations and medication, as necessary. Many of these services are offered three nights a week at the Evening Treatment Center (Barrios Unidos), staffed by Transitional Specialists and clinicians from Youth Service's.

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